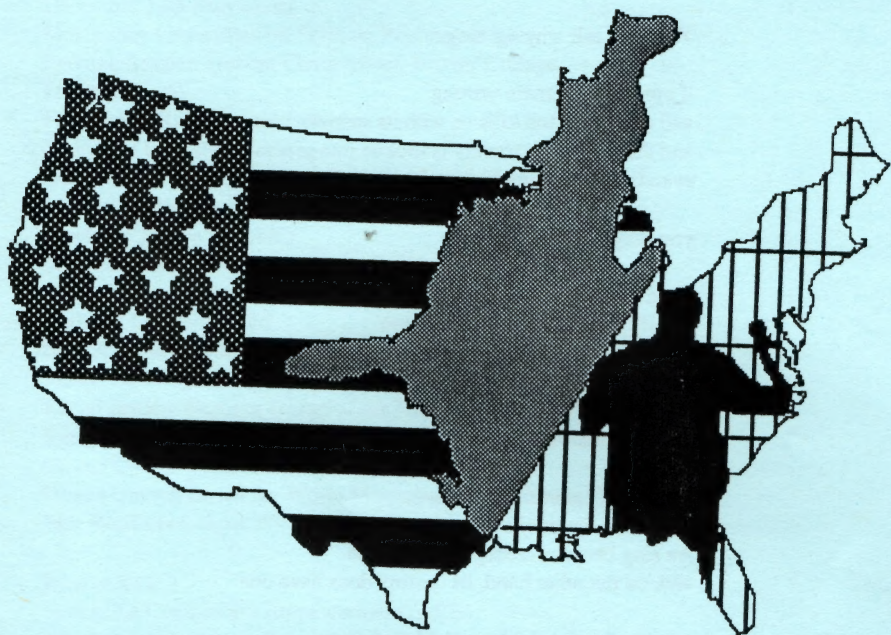


**INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL ON THE
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
OF POLITICAL/POW PRISONERS IN THE US**

24 E. 116th St., New York, New York 10029 (212) 860-4101



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**HUNTER COLLEGE
68TH ST. & LEXINGTON
DECEMBER 7-10, 1990**

WHY WE SING

Mario Benedetti

If each hour brings its own death
if time is a den of thieves
and the winds are not favorable now
and life is nothing more than a moving target

You may ask why we sing.

if our heroes remain unsung
and our homeland kills us with its sadness
and the heart of humanity is broken into pieces
even before shame bursts it

you may ask why we sing.

if we are far away like a horizon
and if trees and sky stay there too
if each night is always some kind of absence
and each awakening a departure

you may ask why we sing.

we sing because the river sings
and when the river sings / the river sings
we sing because cruelty has no name
and, on the other hand, its destiny does have one

we sing for the children and for all
and because of the future to come and because of the people
we sing because the survivors
and our dead want us to sing

we sing because to scream is not enough
nor is it enough to weep or raise hell
we sing because we believe in the people
and because we will defeat defeat

we sing because the sun recognizes us
and because the countryside smells like springtime
and because in this seed in that fruit
each question has an answer

we sing because it rains in the trench
and we are militants of life
and because we can not and will not
let the song become ashes.

read at sentencing and translated by marilyn buck

Statement by Marilyn Buck

at her sentencing at the Resistance Conspiracy Case
November 16, 1990

I am a child of World War II. I grew up in a period when the struggle for human rights and self-determination matured and won some victories; where the Nuremburg principles and the Geneva Accords were put forward; when Brown vs. the Board of Education opened some doors. It was supposed to be a new era—of peace and prosperity.

But it was also this period when the US went to war against the Korean people; and when Nixon's and McCarthy's witch-hunt against the Left sent people to prison, and took their livelihoods from them; and Black people were still being lynched...

While I was not aware of all these events when they first happened, they have played important roles in the formation of my consciousness and my conscience.

My consciousness did not merely register that there were rights and wrongs, but also that a person has the responsibility to struggle for what is just and against what is unjust. I am not unique. Nor are any of the comrades who have been charged in this case. Tens of thousands of post-World War II children learned this lesson as we watched what was happening right here in the US:

—Against Black peoples' just demands for human and civil rights, dogs were unleashed, clubs were swung, and even children were murdered.

—Against the Vietnamese peoples' just demands for an end to US domination, bombs were dropped, and hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese were murdered.

I learned about crime and criminal acts—those of the US government about whom I was taught to sing: "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty..."

And I learned about conspiracies:

—to dispossess Native Americans from their lands by genocide and war;

—to finance an empire by enslaving African peoples, robbing them of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—in the words of the Declaration of Independence—for whites only);

—and about conspiracies to spread the US empire by invading and colonizing Puerto Rico and the Philippines...

Today these conspiracies or criminal enterprises are indictable as crimes against peace; as war crimes; and as crimes against humanity.

Special International Tribunal of Political Prisoners/POV

Thursday, December 6, 1990

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Art Exhibit: Political Resistance

El Bohio Gallery

605 East 9th Street (bet. Ave. B & C)

New York, NY 10009

Friday, December 7th, 1990

8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Registration

9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Tribunal proceedings

The Playhouse, Hunter College

12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.

Lunch

Video presentations on political prisoners

The Playhouse, Hunter College

2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Tribunal proceedings

The Playhouse, Hunter College

7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Politico-Cultural Activity

The Playhouse, Hunter College

Saturday, December 8, 1990

8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Registration

9:00 a.m. to 12 noon

Tribunal proceedings

The Playhouse, Hunter College

12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.

Workshop: Ms. Francisca

"The Hunger Strike of Political Prisoners in Spain" HNC 101

2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Tribunal Proceedings

The Playhouse, Hunter College

8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Shaman Repertory Theatre

"The Journey Inward"

The Playhouse, Hunter College

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Sunday, December 9, 1990

All day deliberations by the judges.
Not open to the public.

All day workshops and cultural activities.

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10:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.
Conditions of Political Prisoners Abroad

Lunch

Villalba Merino
Political Prisoners in

12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Special Conditions at Marion

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2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Literary Reading in Spanish

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3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
After the Tribunal, What?

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5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Dinner

Monday, December 10, 1990

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Press Conference
Solarium Room, Hunter College

So are the more recent conspiracies of the US government:

—*the invasions of Grenada and Panama*

—*the criminal enterprise to overthrow the democratically-elected government of Nicaragua.*

—*as well as the newest one brewing—to gain military, economic and political control of the Middle East region by going to war against Iraq, after supplying that country with arms.*

If these criminal conspiracies of the US government are indictable, then I, too, or any one in this room, or in this whole country, is liable under international law. Because knowledge makes me part of the conspiracy.

Unless one espouses it, and takes affirmative measures to prevent the commission of the crimes.

However, when people take such measures, the US charges conspiracy, seditious conspiracy, criminal conspiracy. It tries to criminalize and delegitimize political opposition so that it will not be forced to face its own criminal behavior and make serious charges.

Tens of thousands of people have engaged in conspiracies to resist US war crimes and the white supremacist ruling class parody of democracy. These are honorable conspiracies, if we of this nation are to live with other nations in equality and peace, and with ourselves.

We each have a choice—to stand with the vast majority of peoples of the world who are struggling for self-determination and social justice or—to stand on their backs.

I cannot betray the millions of people who struggle to be free and I cannot betray my conscience.

I have cast my lot with oppressed nations. Because of this, I am now imprisoned. I am a political prisoner, along with many other women and men from both the oppressed colonized nations who struggle for liberation, and from the white oppressor nation who refuses to accept the criminal genocidal policies of this government.

The wheels of the law roll over us, burying us in its dungeons, and its graves.

But the wheels of justice will come bringing freedom. They turn slowly because they are pushed forward inch by inch as women and men all over the world struggle to transform the dream of justice into the reality.

Your lives, my life, our lives have a significance that cannot be tarnished or twisted when we raise our voices to protest and to challenge and to resist injustice and stand with courage for liberation and the future.

And that is reason enough to raise our voices.

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Community Self Defense Program
December 12th Movement
Emergency Committee on Political Prisoners Rights
Evening Session Student Government, Hunter College
Freedom Now!
Free Puerto Rico Committee
Friends of the Ohio 7
General Board of Church and Society, United Methodist Church
Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project of the
Prophetic Justice Unit/NCC
International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples
Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN-PR)
National Lawyers Guild
New Afrikan People's Organization-NAPO
Prairie Fire Organizing Committee-PFOC
Racial Justice Working Group of the National Council of Churches
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Committee to End the Marion Lockdown
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